



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
OFFICE OF CONSUMER COUNSEL

TEN FRANKLIN SQUARE  
NEW BRITAIN, CONNECTICUT 06051

TELEPHONE  
(860) 827-2900  
VOICE AND TDD  
WWW.CT.GOV/OCC

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**CONSUMER ALERT: Enrolling in Lifeline or ACP Does Not Require Additional Services**

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), issued an advisory on March 11, 2022, to alert consumers on fraudulent enrollment practices being used by some providers of the Lifeline, Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB), and Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) programs.<sup>1</sup>

**Lifeline:** A program established in 1985 by the FCC that provides a monthly subscriber discount to eligible consumers. The discount can be used for wireless or wired telephone and broadband internet services.<sup>2</sup>

**ACP:** Replaced the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program on December 31, 2021. Eligible consumers can receive a discount of up to \$30 for internet services (\$75 per month for qualifying Tribal Households). **Consumers can check on the ACP website if they are eligible and also apply for the benefit at [acpbenefit.org](http://acpbenefit.org).**<sup>3</sup>

The OIG has discovered certain providers who supply both ACP and Lifeline services have been misleading consumers to apply for additional unneeded benefits. When applying for Lifeline services, these providers require consumers to enroll in ACP or, if already enrolled, require consumers to transfer their ACP services in order to complete their application. The OIG notes that other tactics may be employed to get consumers to apply for additional services or transfer their current services. These deceptive tactics are a clear violation of FCC consumer protection rules.<sup>4</sup>

**Consumers should know that they are entitled to apply for both Lifeline and/or ACP, but there is no requirement to apply for additional services when doing so.**

The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) encourages consumers who have been victims of these deceptive practices to contact the FCC OIG Hotline (888-863-2244) or send complaints via email at [hotline@fcc.gov](mailto:hotline@fcc.gov).

From: Interim Consumer Counsel, Claire E. Coleman  
For more information, please contact us at [OCC.Info@ct.gov](mailto:OCC.Info@ct.gov)

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<sup>1</sup> [Inspector General Advisory on Providers Deceiving Lifeline Consumers | Federal Communications Commission \(fcc.gov\)](https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/advocacy/20220311-ig-advisory-providers-deceiving-lifeline-consumers)

<sup>2</sup> [Lifeline Support for Affordable Communications | Federal Communications Commission \(fcc.gov\)](https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/advocacy/lifeline-support-affordable-communications)

<sup>3</sup> [Home - ACP - Universal Service Administrative Company \(acpbenefit.org\)](http://acpbenefit.org)

<sup>4</sup> 36 FCC Rcd 8324 (12) & 47 CFR §54.1810(a)(3)